the Ministry. Of these 19 cases are over three years old. These cases are pending because the attributability due to service is disputed. However, in these cases admissible service pension or ordinary family pension as the case may be, has been sanctioned as per rules. Every effort is made to finalise pension cases as soon as possible

[Translation]

Cataract Operation

1340. SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :
SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN :
KUMARI UMA BHARATI :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of blind persons in the country;

(b) whether the eye sight of those blind persons can be restored through a simple operation of cataract;

(c) if so, the number of such persons operated upon and their eye sight restored during the last two years;

(d) whether complaints have been received by Union Government regarding the slow progress made in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the action taken by the Union Government thereon;

(g) whether any strategy has been chalked out by the Government to prevent this ever increasing disease; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) On the basis of a Survey conducted in 1989 it is estimated that there are about 1.2 crore blind persons in the country.

(b) About 80% of blind persons are affected with cataract and their eye sight can be restored through Operation of Cataract.

(c) During last two years 463180 cataract operations were performed.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f). Questions do not arise.

(g) and (h). National Programme for Control of Blindness has been revamped and some of the steps taken by the Govt. in this regard are as under :

1. Stengthening of Ophthalmic infrastructure.
2. Training of Ophthalmic manpower.
3. Establishment of District Blindness Control Societies.
4. Expanding coverage to rural and tribal areas.
5. Creating awareness about the eye care among the masses
6. Revising the pattern of assistance to States/UTs and NGOs.
7. Increasing financial outlay in the annual budget and implementing the World Bank Cataract Blindness Control Project in Seven States, and
8. Strengthening the monitoring of Eye Care activities at the Central, State and District level.

Study Tour of Foreign Countries

1341. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any delegations had visited foreign countries during the last three years to conduct studies for the purpose of development expansion of Indian ports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there was any member in the delegation from Karnataka;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have chalked out any long term plan for the development of ports in the country on the basis of that study; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b). No delegation for the specific purpose of conducting studies for the development/expansion of Indian ports visited foreign countries during the last three years. However, there have been visits by officers to various countries like Australia, Netherlands, Phillippines, Japan, Singapore, Malayasia, U.K. etc. in connection with Port specific Projects, Port related training etc.

(c) and (d). Officers of New Mangalore Port Trust from Karnataka were deputed to countries like U.K., Japan, Singapore and Malaysia for attending various Port related management and development programmes.

(e) and (f). The various port specific studies and training programmes abroad help in formulating long term development plans of the port sector in the country. Such studies, for example, have helped in deciding the layout for the coal handling plant at Paradip Port and lay out for Ennore port.